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University of Toronto
Faculty of Music

Opera Division

*Spring
Opera
Scenes*

Saturday, April 27, 1996

8 pm

MacMillan Theatre
Edward Johnson Building

PROGRAMME

The Italian Girl in Algiers

Scene from Act I (in English)

Gioachino Rossini

(1792 - 1868)

Isabella

Taddeo

Ali

Pirates

Vilma Indra Vitols

Sung Chung

Taras Kulish

Robert Martin

John McGillis

Musical Director

Stage Director

Pianist

Stephen Ralls

Constance Fisher

Laura Friesen

On a shore of Algeria, Ali and his Moslem hoard have captured the shipwrecked Italians, Isabella and her besotted admirer, Taddeo. The situation terrifies Taddeo though Isabella takes it in her stride even when Ali tells them that they are both destined for the harem of the local Bey. Taddeo's cowardice irritates Isabella just as her nonchalance has a grating effect on him. Left alone for a moment, Isabella's courage abruptly fails her. But she and Taddeo are sure that by mutual support they can conquer any foreseeable difficulty.

Werther

Act III; Scene 1 (in French)

Jules Massenet

(1842 - 1912)

Charlotte

Sophie

Maid

Liesel Fedkenheuer

Monica Walsh

Megan Easton

Musical Director

Stage Director

Pianist

Stephen Ralls

Ann Cooper Gay

Sabatino Vacca

It is Christmas Eve and Charlotte rereads her love letters from the poet, Werther. Since entering into her loveless marriage with Albert, the letters are the only tangible remembrance she has of the young poet, letters reflective of their troubled love and prophetic of its doom. Charlotte can barely bring herself to read Werther's last letter which echoes his promise that she would see him again at Christmas.

Sophie arrives and seeing her sister distraught invites her to come home for the celebrations of the season. Charlotte reluctantly accepts, but moments after Sophie's departure, she is again drawn to the letters.

Hansel and Gretel

Act II (in English)

Engelbert Humperdinck

(1854 - 1921)

Hansel

Maria Kowan

Gretel

Lilac Caña

The Sandman

Kathleen Flynn

Musical Director

Stephen Ralls

Stage Director

Constance Fisher

Pianist

Laura Friesen

As a punishment for mischief, Hansel and Gretel have been sent into the forest to gather strawberries. Hansel has filled his basket with berries and Gretel has made a wreath with which her brother crowns her. Before they realize what they are doing, the children eat all of the berries and then find it has become too dark to find any more or even make their way home. Although frightened they grow weary and fall asleep.

INTERMISSION

Faust

Act III; Scene 2 (in French)

Charles Gounod

(1818 -1893)

Marguerite
Méphistophélès
Monks

Linda Karry
David Jefferies
Elisabeth Beattie
Heather Gay
Ryan Harper
Nicole Shaw

Musical Director
Stage Director
Pianist

James Fraser Craig
Ann Cooper Gay
Catherine Maguire

Marguerite, remorseful and abandoned by Faust, has come to church to pray for him and the child she will bear. Even in sacred surroundings, however, she cannot escape the scornful torments of Méphistophélès and his demons.



La Traviata

Act II (in Italian)

Giuseppe Verdi

(1813 - 1901)

Violetta Valery
Alfredo Germont
Giorgio Germont
Annina
Giuseppe

Monica Huisman
Robert Martin
John McGillis
Sabrina Santelli
Michael Colvin

Musical Director
Stage Director
Pianist

James Fraser Craig
Michael Patrick Albano
Laura Friesen

In the first act of the opera, Violetta Valery, a celebrated Parisian courtesan, has been introduced to Alfredo Germont, a young man of a highly respected family. The couple fall in love and Violetta gladly abandons her meaningless existence to find happiness with Alfredo in a country villa. Unknown to Alfredo, Violetta is forced to sell all her possessions in order to maintain their present ménage. When this information is revealed to Alfredo by Violetta's maid, Annina, he rushes off to Paris to raise money of his own. Violetta, somewhat puzzled by his hasty departure, receives a letter from a Parisian friend inviting her to a party. The social whirl of the city no longer means anything to her and she puts aside the invitation. When a visitor is announced, she is surprised and briefly ill-at-ease to find that it is Alfredo's father. His abrupt and insulting manner quickly vanishes as Violetta reveals a dignity he little expected. He tells her that Alfredo's sister is shortly to marry, but that the relationship of Violetta and Alfredo is jeopardizing the proposed match. Violetta understands the problem and reluctantly agrees that she and Alfredo could part for a period. This is not enough for Germont. Even though Violetta tells him that a deadly illness threatens her life, he demands a complete renunciation from her. With heavy heart, Violetta accedes to his wishes.

There and Back

Complete (in English)

Paul Hindemith

(1895 - 1963)

<i>Helene</i>	Michelle Neville
<i>Auntie</i>	Sabrina Santelli
<i>Robert</i>	Steve Gokool
<i>A Maid</i>	Alexandra Tait
<i>A Doctor</i>	Colin Roche
<i>A Nurse</i>	Ayelet Porzecanski
<i>An Angel</i>	Vilma Indra Vitols

Musical Director and Pianist
Stage Director

Michael Evans
Michael Patrick Albano

This little opera is a typical product of the Berlin 1920's, a time when young artists took a delight in experimental iconoclasm.

A bourgeois family tragedy, the murder of a faithless woman on her birthday by her jealous husband is enacted in an absurdly compressed way. We are then invited to view the proceedings in a different light. Events occur in reverse order and at the end of the piece the wife is as happily unfaithful as ever. The music includes jazz elements and satirizes Baroque and ecclesiastical conventions.



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